ON THE BIRDS OF THE KUNGWE-MAHARI AREA IN WESTERN TANGANYIKA TERRITORY

By

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INTRODUCTION

This is a report on the more interesting avifaunistical and taxonomic findings of the Oxford University Tanganyika Expedition in which the authors took part as zoologists. The investigation area consisted of the Kungwe-Mahari area on the east shore of Lake Tanganyika, in Western Province, Tanganyika Territory (lat. 6°S., long. 30°E.). This area is of especial interest from a zoogeographical point of view, since it lies in the transition zone between the chief West African and East African subdivisions of the Ethiopian Region. The fact that it is an isolated mountain block inhabited by several endemic subspecies of birds and one endemic species adds further interest to the area. It has, so far as we are aware, never been visited by a zoologist intent on making a thorough survey of any animal group, but Moreau (1943) sent his African collector into the area during a fairly long period. Moreau's paper is the only previous ornithological contribution from the area.

The 1958 Expedition party consisted of three botanists, one geologist and two anthropologists, apart from the zoologists. S.U. worked in the area from July 4 until September 10, while H.F.L. departed on August 8.

The zoological work (and indeed the carrying out of the whole project) was made possible by the generous support and kindness of the Ministry of National Resources and the Game Warden, Mr. G. H. Swynnerton, to whom we are particularly grateful for putting a team of game scouts at our disposal. The Game Ranger of Western Province, Mr. A. J. Mence, favoured our work in several ways, participating in it for two periods. The Head Game Scout, Mr. Musa Rajabu, contributed substantially to the success of our work by his constant interest and his ability as a supervisor of the African staff.

The participation in the expedition of S.U. was made possible through generous grants from the Swedish State Council for Scientific Research and Helge Axelson Johnson's Foundation. A journey to London in March, 1959, was facilitated through a grant from the Royal Physiographical Society of Lund, and at the British Museum much advice was given by Mr. J. D. Macdonald and Mrs. B. P. Hall to whom thanks are also due.

Brief description of the investigation area

Only a very brief survey of the chief habitat types within the area is given here, since a more detailed description of the ecology of the bird fauna is planned to be worked out later.

It should first be mentioned that our stay in Kungwe-Mahari fell entirely within the dry season. No rain at all occurred during the months spent there.

1. As is well known, Lake Tanganyika is extremely deep. There are practically no islands, and the shores are generally steep and rocky. In some places, however, the

shore consists of sandy beaches. The aquatic macro-vegetation seems to be negligible if not absent. All these circumstances make the lake very poor from an ornithologist's point of view. However, the fish fauna is abundant, and it is somewhat surprising that there are so few birds utilising this source of food.

2. Behind the beaches there is usually a zone of mixed *Acacia-Brachystegia* woodland with patches of dense bushes and tall grass. This is a rich zone, several species of birds being found exclusively in it. These species, therefore, seem to be ecologically dependent upon the acacias, which constitute the chief distinction of this habitat.

3. Between the lake and the mountain ridges there is an area of lowland where the ground is flat or slightly undulating. It is covered by a nearly unbroken *Brachystegia* woodland. The trees are of relatively small size, and undergrowth is in the dry season nearly absent. The bird life is extremely poor, having few if any distinctive species.

4. Above about 4,500 ft. the Kungwe-Mahari mountains are covered with grassland, only occasional clumps of trees being found on the ridges. The higher the level, the shorter the grass and the richer is the flora of herbs. Parts of the grassland were burnt during our stay in the area.

5. Along rivers and creeks on the slopes of the Kungwe-Mahari ridge there are gallery forests of varying richness. Some are fairly poor, others are incredibly dense and luxuriant. An important division may be made between forests without and those with bamboo *(Arundinaria)*, the transition coming at about 6,000 ft. At the highest peaks, the forests broaden out and lose their dependence upon the streams. Ecologically there do not seem to exist important differences between high gallery forests and mountain forests.

6. To the east of Kungwe-Mahari and separated from it by a valley, there is another ridge running parallel to the main ridge but considerably lower. It is known as Kabesi ridge. This is covered with a *Brachystegia* woodland which differs from the lowland type in carrying leaves towards the end of the dry season. The avifauna was incomparably richer here than in the lowland Brachystegia. On the slopes of the ridges there was a narrow zone of lowland bamboo *(Oxytenanthera)*, which was dry and practically devoid of higher animal life.

Scope of the ornithological work in Kungwe-Mahari

The aim of the ornithological work was to make as complete a survey of the avifauna in all habitats as the time would allow. We therefore carried out collecting and observation work in all the habitats described above. The bird collection amounts to over 300 specimens. It has been shared between the Zoological Museum of Lund University, Sweden, and the Game Department Museum, Arusha, Tanganyika Territory. We did not see any point in collecting specimens of easily recognisable species, such as larger birds of prey, herons and storks. For many purposes, a reliable sight-record is as useful as a skin of these species.

We also paid attention to some problems besides the purely faunistical ones. All evidence on breeding status was carefully collected, and our notes in this matter seem to contain many records of considerable interest. In August, S.U. paid particular

attention to the ecological distribution of the species of the families Pycnonotidae and Muscicapidae, and the material gathered will be published in a separate context. S.U. also made a study of the migratory behaviour in two species of birds of prey *(Milvus migrans, Aquila wahlbergi)*.

In this paper we give a report on those species which seem to be of faunistical and/or taxonomical interest. Some specific problems which have been discussed elsewhere are referred to in this communication also.

Sight-records are given without subspecific names, as subspecies generally should not be determined in the field.

Selected list of birds found in Kungwe-Mahari

Melanophoyx ardesiaca (Wagler). Recorded independently by H.F.L. and S.U. at the lake shore on July 8. Probably a casual wanderer.

Erythrocnus rufiventris (Sundevall). A female with inactive gonads collected at the lake shore on July 16. The only record of this scarce species.

Ardeirallus sturmii (Wagler). A female with inactive gonads collected at the lake shore on July 18. The only record of the species.

Torgos tracheliotus (Forster). Three observations of two, one and one birds respectively. The distribution given for this species in Mackworth-Praed and Grant (I:134) is incorrect whilst the data in Chapin (I:533) are truer. The species occurs in many places in North, Central and Western Tanganyika.

Falco peregrinus Tunstall. A pair was seen at close quarters and under circumstances very strongly indicating breeding on the peak of Mt. Sisaga (8,100 ft.). This is an interesting record in view of the divergent opinions in handbooks about the status of this species in tropical Africa.

Milvus migrans (Boddaert) (=*Milvus aegyptius* Sharpe and Bouvier). As published in some detail elsewhere (Ulfstrand, in press) there was a tremendous southward passage migration of this species in August and early September, nearly 1,000 birds being counted on migration in one single day (August 9). They were not palaearctic birds, being yellow-billed, and probably they were on their way southwards to breed. The time of the year fits well with data from Northern Rhodesia (Benson and White 1957) and South Africa (Roberts 1958).

Machaehamphus alcinus Westerman. One individual seen late in the evening of September 5 at a small village near the foot-hills of Mahari ridge (3,800 ft.). The behaviour of the bird was conclusive as its appearance, for it caught a bat in mid-air and started eating it in full flight.

Aquila wahlbergi Sundevall. The migratory movements of this species have been described together with those of the Kite. It may only be mentioned that the general direction of movement of this species was also south. Some pairs were seen courtship-displaying in a typically aquiline-buteonine way, the male "playfully" diving towards the female.

Stephanoaëtus coronatus (Linné). One or two pairs were present on Mahari ridge and were doubtless breeding.

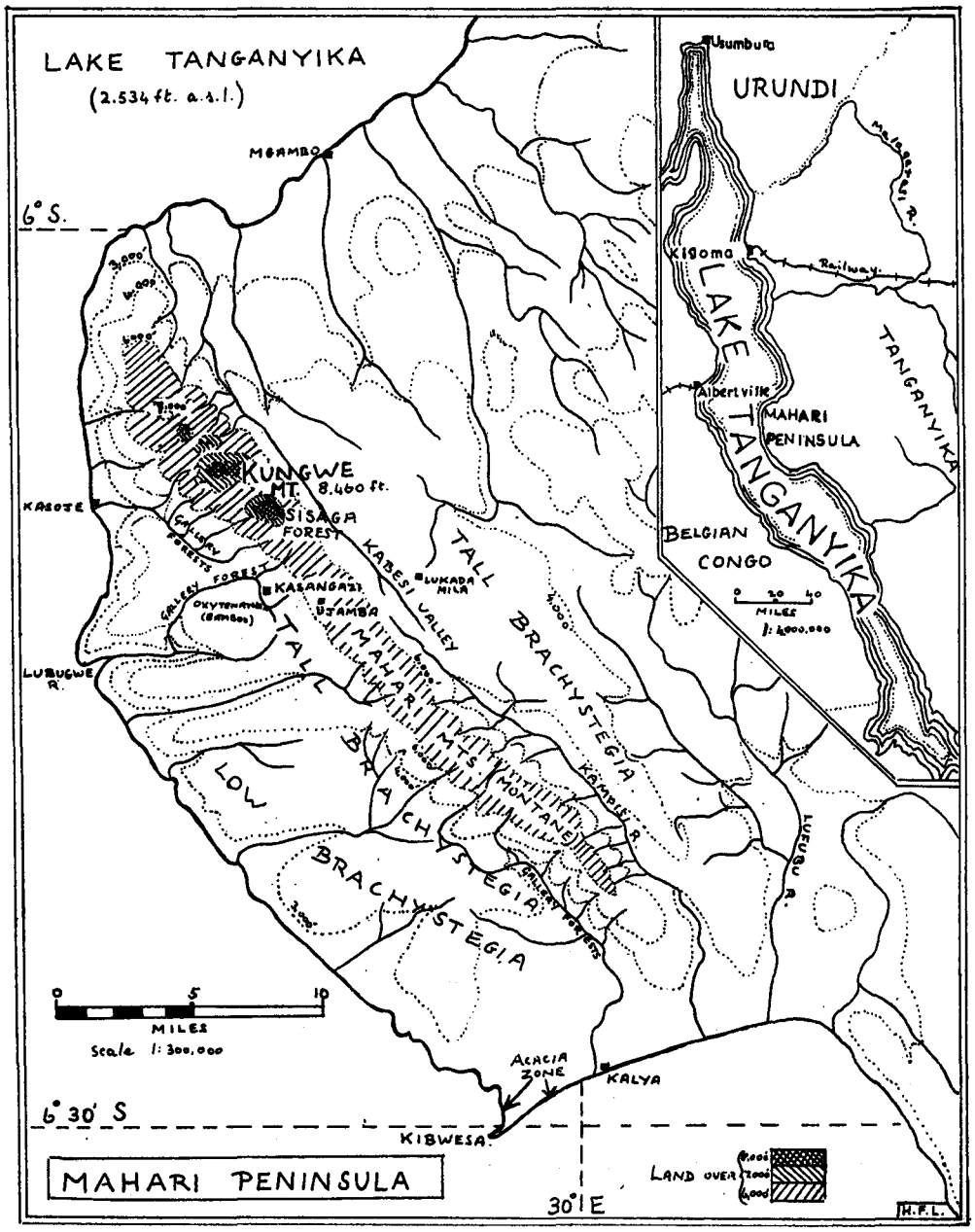
Cuncuma vocifer (Daudin). Very common along the lake shore. Our observations do not support the assumption of Moreau (1943:400) that this species and:—

Gypohierax angolensis (Gmelin) are mutually exclusive, for both were seen in numbers over the bay at Kigoma. At Kungwe-Mahari the latter species was, however, only recorded a few times.

Buteo oreophilus Hartert and Neumann. Some relatively small buzzards having light undersides with dark spots and stripes which were recorded over Mahari and Kabesi ridges have tentatively been assigned to this name. They were not juveniles of *Buteo rufofuscus* (Forster). Recently Rudebeck (1956) has made a very good case for including *B. oreophilus* into *B. buteo*, and it is undeniable that the birds seen by us were strongly reminiscent of Common Buzzards in outline and flight. This field impression is mentioned for any value it may have.

Pandion haliaetus (Linné). One or two individuals constantly observed at Lake Tanganyika in July and August.

Tringa hypoleucos Linné. Several birds "summering" at Lake Tanganyika (one, unsexed,


LAKE TANGANYIKA
(2,534 ft. a.s.l.)
MOMBO
6° S.
KUNGWE MT. 8,460 ft.
SISAGA FOREST
KASOTE
KASANGAZI
UJAMBA
LUKADA MILA
KABESI VALLEY
TALL BRACHYSTEGIA
MAHARI MTS
LOW BRACHYSTEGIA
MONTANE
KAMPEMBA R.
LUBUGWE R.
ACACIA ZONE
KALYA
KIBWESA
6° 30' S
30° E
MAHARI PENINSULA
0 5 10
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URUNDI
Usumbura
Kigoma
Railway
LAKE TANGANYIKA
Albertville
MAHARI PENINSULA
BELGIAN CONGO
0 30 40
MILES
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LAND OVER
H.F.L.

collected July 9). Already from the beginning of August their numbers started rising, and the species was common from about August 20.

Tringa glareola Linné. One recorded on September 8 at Lake Tanganyika.

Tringa nebularia (Gunnerus). Single birds at Lake Tanganyika on August 7 and September 8.

Numenius arquata (Linné). Two flying south over the lake shore on September 10.

Numenius phaeopus (Linné). One at Lake Tanganyika on September 8.

Chlidonias leucoptera (Temminck). A small flock was stationary at a rocky point in Lake Tanganyika in July, but numbers gradually fell and none were seen after August 1. Three specimens were collected on July 13, one male in breeding plumage with slightly active gonads and two males in non-breeding plumage with dormant gonads.

Streptopelia lugens (Rüppell). A scarce species, nesting in dense gallery forests at 6,500 to 7,500 ft. One nest was found in a branch fork about 24 ft. above the ground. A female collected on July 28 had an egg ready to be laid in the oviduct.

Aplopelia larvata larvata (Temminck and Knip). One specimen was collected on July 27 near the village of Ujumba at 7,000 ft. It is the only record of the species. The determination of the bird was made after careful comparisons in the British Museum, and there is no doubt that it agrees perfectly with the topotypical material of *larvata*. It is of great interest to note that the West African dove *A. simplex jacksoni* Sharpe has been found in Kungwe-Mahari by Moreau (1943:387) both for the taxonomy of the forms involved and from zoogeographical reasons.

Pachycoccyx audeberti validus (Reichenow). A female with slightly active gonads was collected on Kabesi ridge on August 22.

Tauraco corythaix schalowi (Reichenow). We follow Moreau (1958) in the classification of the turacoes. This species of which three specimens were taken on August 1, 10 and 26, was common in gallery forests above 6,000 ft. but was on a few occasions found also in lowland *Brachystegia*. In the gallery forests it was in full breeding, but the birds in the lowland were always in family parties. The higher the level, the more abundant was the species. Our specimens agree well with the ssp. *schalowi*. The only other turaco in the area was *Tauraco porphyreolophus chlorochlamys* (Shelley) of which also three specimens were secured. It was a lowland bird, isolated from contact with the preceding species but for the family parties of corythaix descending into the lowland after breeding (cf. Moreau *op. cit.*: 111).

Merops apiaster Linné. During our last three days in the area, viz. September 8 to 10, large flocks of this bird were recorded.

Merops superciliosus superciliosus Linné. On the same days as for the preceding species, large numbers of this bird were also seen, and one specimen, a female with inactive gonads, was secured on September 10.

Merops nubicoides Des Murs and Pucheran. On August 20, a flock of 14 birds was attending a grass-fire on Kabesi ridge. After a while they gained height and disappeared southwards.

Glaucidium perlatum (Vieillot). A male collected near the lake shore on August 12. There was a family with fledged young resident at the place, near Kibwesa Point.

Glaucidium capense capense (Smith). A female collected near the lake shore on August 10 is the only record of the species.

Bubo lacteus (Temminck). One bird observed at close quarters in *Brachystegia* woodland near the lake shore on July 16 by B. E. Juniper, botanist to the Expedition, and S.U.

Caprimulgus fervidus fervidus Sharpe (= *C. pectoralis fervidus* Sharpe). A male with much enlarged testes was collected at the foot of Mahari ridge on July 22.

Semeiophorus vexillarius Gould. A male with elongated primaries and active gonads was collected in highland *Brachystegia* on September 1. Several small groups were recorded in the last days of August and first week in September, but none had been seen before. There thus seemed to be a sudden influx about this time into the area.

Colius striatus cinerascens Neumann. Two birds were collected, viz. a male near the lake shore on July 11 and a female at the foot of Mahari ridge on July 25. Both had active gonads. It seems that the classification of this species is in a fairly confused state and in need of a thorough revision. We have compared our specimens with several East African subspecies, and find that they agree very well with ssp. *cinerascens*. Topotypical material of this subspecies was available i.e. in the Game Dept. Museum, Arusha. According to Mackworth-Praed and Grant

(I:685 *et seq.*) the subspecies coming nearest to Kungwe-Mahari is *ugandensis* van Someren, but our birds are definitely greyer. The more southerly subspecies *affinis* Shelley is also more rufous, particularly in the crest, than our specimens. The colour of the iris in our birds was lemon-yellow. The population was, at least in part, breeding.

Lybius torquatus zombae (Shelley). Two specimens were secured, both females and one with active, the other with inactive gonads. Our specimens have been carefully compared with material of the nominate race (type locality: Cape Province) and of the subspecies *zombae* (type locality: Zomba, Southern Nyasaland), and we find that they agree much better with the latter group. With this conclusion, Mrs. B. P. Hall is in agreement. It has to be admitted that the red colour of the breast and belly is very variable indeed, but the colour and stippling of the upper parts allow subspecific determination. Nests were found in July.

Indicator minor minor Stephens. A male was collected in dense mountain forest near Mt. Sisaga on September 1. It was flushed from the remnants of a bees' nest which had been robbed by Africans a couple of days earlier. This seems to be an unusual habitat of the species.

Campethera taeniolaema Reichenow and Neumann. An adult and a juvenile male were collected together in gallery forest on Mahari ridge on August 1. This means a very considerable extension of the species' known range.

Campethera abingoni annectens (Neumann). Two specimens were obtained, viz. a male from near the lake shore on August 12 and a female from the foot of Kabesi ridge on September 2. The gonads of the latter example, which was moreover in company with a male and performing courtship display, were active. The classification of the species is fairly confused, the review by Clancey (1959), taking only the South African populations into account, does little to clarify the situation. Greatest similarities can be found with Angolan specimens (ssp. *annectens*), but the wing measurements are fairly large (121 and 123 mm. respectively) and agree with south Angolan but not with north Angolan specimens. Mrs. B. P. Hall has kindly looked at the specimens and agrees that they are best named as suggested above. White (1957) brings ssp. *annectens* up to Rukwa and Ufipa, but our record means an interesting extension of the known range.

Anthus novaezeelandiae cinnamomeus Rüppell. We obtained a small series of this species, three birds being taken at the lake shore and five in the mountains at levels between 6,500 and 7,800 ft. When studying them we have received much advice from Mrs. B. P. Hall for which we are most grateful. We have examined part of the material in British Museum and also the collections of Coryndon Museum, Nairobi, Naturhistoriska Riksmuseum, Stockholm, Sweden, and Malmö Museum, Sweden. The eight specimens are very dissimilar. Those from the lake shore are moderately pale, agreeing with specimens from many places in East Africa including Lake Naivasha, the type locality of ssp. *lacuum* Meinertzhagen. We were therefore initially in favour of placing them under this name. But White's paper (1957) on the interesting nature of the geographical and local variation in the East African populations of this species convinced us that it is better to use the name *cinnamomeus*, as suggested by him.

The five specimens from the mountains are very much darker, both on the upper and on the lower sides, and the light pattern on the lacteral rectrices (Hall 1957) is nearly covered by pigments. In the Coryndon Museum we examined a specimen from North-eastern Belgian Congo, labelled as *Anthus latistriatus* Jackson, which was quite similar to our darkest bird. However, there is much in favour of dropping this name and including these melanistic birds, which occur in "pockets" all over East Africa, under the name *cinnamomeus*. We have sent our darkest specimen to Mrs. Hall who comments: "The specimen of *Anthus novaezeelandiae* is, as you note, an exceptionally dark bird, but can be matched here by some from Mlanje Mt., Nyasaland, and — speaking from memory — is like some collected by Prigogine in the Eastern Congo. These islands of exceptionally dark birds on the mountains are very difficult to deal with taxonomically, and I am inclined to agree with White that they should not be considered as a distinct subspecies. On the other hand, for purposes of discussion, it is quite useful to be able to refer to them as of a melanistic or *latistriatus* variety".

Pseudoalcippe abyssinicus abyssinicus (Rüppell). Two specimens obtained, both females with active gonads. We agree with Moreau (1951) that the subspecies *ansorgei* (Rothschild) is not valid.

Pycnonotus barbatus tricolor (Hartlaub) x *layardi* Gurney. Three specimens obtained of this ubiquitous species. Taxonomically the population was not at all easy to treat. We agree with White (1956) that *P. xanthopygos* (Hemprich and Ehrenberg) and *P. tricolor* (Hartlaub) are probably conspecific and may be united under the name *P. barbatus*. We have compared our specimens with topotypical material of the subspecies *tricolor* and *layardi* and found that our birds are inter-

mediate. According to White *(op. cit.)* this is best expressed in the way we have followed. There seems to be an interesting situation with long but fairly narrow zones of intermediate birds between different races of this species. Using more traditional taxonomy, our birds would be best named as ssp. *fayi.*

Pyrrhurus scandens orientalis (Hartlaub). A female with active gonads was collected in a gallery forest at about 3,700 ft. on August 5. The specimen can be matched with specimens from the Sudan and Northern Belgian Congo.

Phyllastrephus flavostriatus tenuirostris (Fischer and Reichenow). Three specimens were taken, all in gallery and mountain forests above 7,000 ft. The Kungwe-Mahari population of this species was separated by Moreau (1941) under the name *kungwensis,* but we find the differences very slight indeed and prefer including the birds under *tenuirostris.* Of all the birds of the area, supposed to be endemic, this is definitely the least differentiated (if at all).

Arizelocichla nigriceps kungwensis Moreau. The local population of this species of which we secured two specimens, is clearly different from other populations and definitely merits subspecific separation.

Platysteira peltata Sundevall ssp. Three specimens obtained. The green wash of the upper parts speaks well for referring the birds to the nominate race, but the wing measurements are at the upper limit for this form. Possibly, therefore, the population is intermediate between the nominate race and the subspecies *mentalis* Bocage.

Dyaphorophyia concreta kungwensis Moreau. Two males obtained. With *Apalis argentea* this is best marked of all the endemic forms of Kungwe-Mahari. It was described by Moreau (1941), and the two species *D. concreta* and *D. ansorgei* (Hartert) have been reviewed by Macdonald and Usher (1952). The latter authors discuss the role of fading in the museum material, and we find some support for their opinion that the yellow colour on the underside is subject to gradual change from the fact that our birds are more strongly yellow than any specimens in the British Museum collection. A point which requires further investigation is the geographical variation (if any) in the colour of the eye-wattles. Mackworth-Praed and Grant (II:213) state that it is green in the subspecies *D. concreta graueri* Hartert, and Bannerman (VIII:403) gives "apple-green" for *D. concreta lomaensis* Serle.

No information is given for the *kungwensis* population in this respect, neither in the original description nor in the handbooks. It is, therefore, of great interest to note that both our specimens when freshly killed had extremely bright china-blue wattles—so bright, in fact, that in a female watched at close quarters in the field S.U. noted them as being white. However, in the killed birds, the blue colour vanished in a day and was succeeded by a dull sooty black. It remains to see whether the statements in the handbooks are valid for live birds or if they are founded on observations on museum specimens. If it is true that *kungwensis* alone has blue wattles, all the others having green, then there is yet another character emphasising the far-reaching differentiation in this population. As a matter of fact we find it difficult to decide whether *D. concreta kungwensis* is a good species or if it is a very well-marked subspecies. It is, however, in best agreement with the modern trend in avian taxonomy to retain a population such as this within a group of related forms, not to set it apart on its own.

Cossypha bocagei kungwensis Moreau. Two specimens obtained. Another of the endemic birds of Kungwe-Mahari, described by Moreau (1941). Recently Moreau and Benson (1956) have made it probable that the species *insulanai* to which the Kungwe-Mahari birds are referred by Mackworth-Praed and Grant (II:296) is conspecific with *C. bocagei* Finsch and Hartlaub. The closest relative to the Kungwe-Mahari population is *C. bocagei chapini* described by Benson (1955). The wing/tail ratio is an important systematic character in this species. It is being subjected to a separate study by S.U., the details of which will be published separately.

Alethe poliocephala kungwensis Moreau. Five specimens obtained. This is a very well-marked subspecies endemic to the area (Moreau 1941).

Phylloscopus sibilatrix (Bechstein). One specimen was watched at close quarters by S.U. on September 8. The locality was near the village Kibwesa on the lake shore. This seems to be a very southerly record for the species (cf. Mackworth-Praed and Grant II:385, Chapin III:473); perhaps it is the southernmost in Africa. The slender silhouette, the white under parts and the absence of wing-bar(s) in combination with the vivid green colour are conclusive, and it should be pointed out that the observer is extremely familiar with this species from Sweden, and that he has also studied all the other three *Phylloscopus* species (viz., *trochilus* (Linné), *collybita* (Vieillot) and *bonelli* (Vieillot)) recorded in East Africa. The early time of the year was no real surprise to the observer who had witnessed at Ottenby Bird Station on Oland in the Baltic the early departure of this species which had already begun in the last

week of July. As a matter of fact, this seems to be the earliest of all common Swedish passerines to depart in numbers.

Seicercus ruficapillus ochrogularis Moreau. Two specimens collected of this endemic form which is very well-marked (Moreau 1941). It was abundant in gallery and mountain forests with much bamboo above about 6,500 ft.

Apalis flavida golzi (Fischer and Reichenow). Two specimens collected, both males with inactive gonads. As no subspecies is given in Mackworth-Praed and Grant (II:407) for the area in question it may be of interest to put on record that the local birds belonged to the ssp. *golzi*.

Apalis argentea Moreau. A brief note on the juvenile plumage and habitat of this species, endemic to the area, has been published elsewhere (Ulfstrand, in press).

Nilaus afer nigritemporalis Reichenow. One specimen obtained, a male with gonads inactive, on July 11, constitutes the only record of the species. We follow Chapin (IV:79) in considering *nigritemporalis* a subspecies of *afer*, since our specimen actually seems to be somewhat intermediate, although closest to *nigritemporalis*. An intermediate between two subspecies is not abnormal, but an intermediate between two species would be.

Laniarius lühderi Reichenow. Two specimens obtained, one of which is an adult male with active gonads and the other a juvenile bird. Kungwe-Mahari seems to be on the very borderline of the species.

Bocagia minuta anchietae (Bocage). Although we generally adhere to the principle that subspecies should not be determined in the field, in this case, it seems permissible to do so. We examined several specimens through binoculars at moderate distance and under good visibility conditions and are positive that there were no black markings on the mantle. Thus, the subspecies would be *anchietae*. Judging from the information in Mackworth-Praed and Grant (II:628), Kungwe-Mahari lies near the border-line between this subspecies and the nominate race.

Anthoscopus caroli pallescens Ulfstrand. See Ulfstrand (in press).

Oriolus larvatus angolensis Naumann. The classification of African orioles is a matter of divergent opinions (compare Mackworth-Praed and Grant II:665 *et seq.* and Chapin IV:117 *et. seq.*). Within the species *larvatus* we follow Chapin in using the name *angolensis* for our specimen. This decision is based on the wing measurement (139 mm.) which, according to Chapin, is too great for *rolleti* which is restricted by him to more northern populations and is said to have a wing measurement of 121-133 mm.

Oriolus nigripennis percivali O. Grant. Three specimens obtained, viz. a male and female, both juveniles, on July 30 and an adult male on August 3. The wing measurements are 129, 129 and 141 mm. respectively. Due to the co-existence over a large area (Kenya, Uganda, Kungwe-Mahari of this form and the previous one, it seems astonishing that Chapin considers them conspecific, even though it is true that they seem to be fairly strictly isolated ecologically. However, without giving details, Chapin states that birds of intermediate characters between *angolensis* and *percivali* have been found in the Kikuyu Highlands in Kenya. The situation seems to be complicated, and more material and field records seem to be necessary for a definitive decision.

Cinnyris regius anderseni Williams. A well-marked endemic subspecies, recently described (1950). Common at altitudes above about 6,800 ft. in bamboo-rich gallery and mountain forests.

Anthreptes collaris Vieillot ssp. Two males collected on July 19 and 27. They have not been identified subspecifically. We find that they differ from ssp. *zambesiana* (Shelley) through being slightly deeper green on the upperside (fading in museum specimens?).

Symplectes bicolor kigomaensis Grant and Praed. Two females obtained on July 31 and August 30 in a gallery forest at about 6,900 ft. This subspecies has recently been described (1956) and we agree that the birds do differ from ssp. *amaurocephalus* (Cabanis). More cannot be said at the moment, awaiting the revision of the Ploceidae now in progress by Mr. R. E. Moreau.

Spermophaga ruficapilla (Shelley). This extremely skulking species has been previously recorded from Kungwe-Mahari and was also found by us.

Lagonosticta rubricata congica Sharpe. We obtained a male and a female of this species. The male, taken on July 25 at the foot of Mahari ridge, seems to be best referred to *congica* (a race which has been stated to occur in Kungwe-Mahari) but shows a tendency towards ssp. *haematocephala* Neumann.

Concluding remarks

Although the zoogeography and ecology of the avifauna will be discussed elsewhere, partly because a second Kungwe-Mahari expedition from Oxford worked in the area in 1959 and brought together an important bird collection of some 60 specimens, some points of view may be added to the above selected list of more interesting faunistical records.

On the whole the general character of the bird fauna emerging in Moreau's paper (1943) has been substantiated by the present investigation. The number of endemic forms is on the whole unchanged: we take a critical position with regard to one of the forms alleged to be endemic *(Phyllastrephus flavostriatus tenuirostris (kungwensis)*, and one new subspecies was found *(Anthoscopus caroli pallescens)*. This latter form, however, differs from all the other endemisms by being a lowland species, not an evergreen forest inhabitant. It seems probable that this bird is not endemic for the area but has a wider distribution, a matter which may be established after fuller investigations in adjacent parts of Western Tanganyika Territory.

The Brachystegia woodland has connections eastwards, so no isolation between the local population and other populations is likely to exist. On the other hand, the large number of endemic forms in the gallery and mountain forests make it probable that these areas have been isolated during a very long time indeed. Investigation of the local occurrence of other groups of animals will perhaps throw light on the question of the ancient connections to other populations also in the species under consideration. A further analysis of the general distribution of members of the local mountain avifauna, in the light of knowledge gained since 1943, may also help elucidate the problem. In this work the clear West African affinities of the fauna, which exist also in mammals, must be borne in mind.

A record of particular interest is that of the mountain population of *Anthus novaezeelandiae*, the birds being strongly pigmented and referable to the "species" *A. latistriatus* of e.g. Mackworth-Praed and Grant (II: 69). This "variety" of *A. novaezeelandiae* was not previously recorded from Tanganyika Territory.

In the course of our work we covered most of the Kungwe-Mahari peninsula. However, due to lack of time, we did not investigate the northernmost part of the peninsula, including Mt. Kungwe itself. It is very fortunate that the second Expedition to the area, although not having ornithology among its chief objects, did some collecting exactly in the area not covered by us. A report on this collection will be published separately.

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NATURE NOTE

Dear Sir,

Lucky Larvae

When I visited Mrs. Toni Nuti's Guest House on an island in the Kagera River (on the border between Uganda and Tanganyika) just before Christmas last year, I found on arrival part of the verandah barricaded off to protect a small mass, looking, as we all agreed, exactly as if one of the dogs or cats had been sick. On closer inspection this proved to be a mass of small semi-transparent worms all moving slowly together in a kind of jellified mass over the flag-stones of the verandah. Mrs. Nuti believed that they had come out of the hole in the stones made for the bolt of the door. She told me that the servants had been much excited and declared that the presence of these worms portended great wealth and many cattle for the owner of the house and that they should on no account be interfered with. Unfortunately, they failed to find a lodgement in Mrs. Nuti's house, and next morning, as they were clearly dead and drying up, I put the remainder in spirit and took them back to Makerere College. The Professor of Zoology thinks that they are some kind of fly larvae.

I should be interested to know if any of our readers have seen anything of the kind or heard any such legend about it.

Yours, etc.,

PRISCILLA M. ALLEN,
Medical Library,
Makerere College, Kampala.